Council Proceedings.

Council Chamber, March 6th, 1883.

After a three weeks' recess the City Council met last night in the Council Chamber. When His Worship Mayor Meredith took the chair there were present:—Ald. Birrell, Labatt, Hunt, Hyman, O'Meara, Cowan, Stringer, Skinner, Browne, Moore, Boyd, Becher.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

The Clerk read the following

COMMUNICATIONS:—

From G. Park, Secretary of the Forest City Rowing Club, asking for the free use of the City Hall on the evening of the 19th of March for the purpose of giving an athletic exhibition. Referred to the City Chamberlain, with instructions to reserve Hall on al. Mondays.

From W. R. Meredith, City Solicitor, stating that a writ had been issued against the city by one John Mercer for $1,000 for injuries sustained by him on account of a defective highway. No. 2.

From Box Brown, applying for the use of the City Hall for the purpose of giving a lecture on mesmerism. Referred to City Chamberlain.

From Ellen Finnegan, asking for the remission of half her taxes. No. 1.

From John Cant, of Arkona, asking the views of the City Council in reference to the extension of the C. V. R. branch to the town of Sarnia. No. 1.

From A. Kelly, asking relief, he having had the misfortune to lose one of his legs No 3, with power.

From Ann Ross, asking to have the taxes on her property for the year 1878 remitted. No. 1.

From W. Erwood, asking the use of the City Hall for the holding of a dance on Easter Monday. City Chamberlain.

From J. B. Smyth, Secretary of the Western Fair Association, asking that the horse-ring on the Exhibition Grounds be placed under the control of the Association. No. 2, with power.

From C. B. Richardson, stating that he was preparing a map of the city, and asking for an order for the same. No. 2.

From the managers of the Protestant Orphans' Home, asking the Council to take prompt action for the removal of the adult inmates from that institution. The petitioners strongly urged the matter on the Board, as such a step was absolutely necessary, the presence of the old people being very injurious to the young folks. No. 3.

From John Ashworth, claiming $12 damages sustained by water running into his cellar. No. 2.

From Thos. Muir, in reference to a water supply for the steel works.

Moved by Ald. Hyman, seconded by Ald. Birrell, that the petition be referred to the Water Commissioners, and that they be instructed not to cut off the water supply without instructions from the Council. Carried.

NUMBER ONE.

Ald. Hyman, Chairman, reported as follows:—(1) Your committee recommend the payment of accounts amounting to $2,204.11; (2) that the petition of Agnes Portwood for remission of taxes be granted, by remitting half her taxes for 1882; (3) that the petition of Isabella Thompson for remission of taxes be granted; (4) that the petition of Mr. S. Graham, agent of the Singer Manufacturing Company, for reduction in assessment be fyled; (5) that the petition of John J. Gould for remission of income tax be fyled; (6) that the petition of James Taylor, Collector, to have bondsman released be deferred; (7) your committee beg to report progress in the petition of Mrs Mackay for remission of arrears of taxes; (8) your committee beg to submit February report of the Police Court Clerk; (9) your committee beg to submit the by-law in accordance with the Free Libraries Act of 1882; (10) that the by-law closing Mill street, west of Talbot, be abandoned on account of the opposition of property-owners; (11) that the salaries for the year 1883 be as follows:—A. S. Abbott, City Clerk, $1,100; J. M. Keary, Assistant Clerk, $400; John Pope, Treasurer, $1,500; T. H. Tracy, City Engineer, $1,600; R. Wigmore, Police Clerk, $650; L. W. Owens, Street Commissioner, $750; H.

Lee, Inspector, $500; Collectors, three-quarters-per cent amount collected; Assessors, each, $500; R. McWhinney, janitor, $500; J. M. Wilson, Market Clerk, $500. J. W. Nash, Wood Market Clerk, $400; L. Powers, Night-watchman, $350; Expenses Mayor's office, $500; George F. Jewell, Auditor, $300; R. Miller, Auditor, $200. J. Inison, City Hall Fireman (per month), $30; James Grant, Park Caretaker, $600; J. G. Scragge, Exhibition Grounds, $250; (12) that the salary of H. Faunt, caretaker of Salter's Grove, be referred to No. 2 Committee to report; (13) your Committee beg to recommend the third reading of the by-law for closing, selling and conveying part of John street west of Talbot, and that your Committee be instructed to advertise the same for sale at public auction; (14) your Committee beg to refer the Council to a letter from G. F. Jewell, City Auditor, in relation to discrepancies in the roll for 1881 returned by Collector Taylor; (15) your Committee beg to refer the Council to a letter received from H. Lee, Health Inspector, in reference to shortage in dog checks, and would recommend in accordance with the Auditor's verbal report to accept statement of returns; (16) your Committee beg to recommend that a by-law be prepared for the issue of debentures for the sum of $175,000, to run for thirty years, bearing 5 per cent. interest, with a sinking fund of 1½ per cent., said by-law containing the privilege to issue debentures either in currency or sterling exchange, or both, in the latter case to be made at par rate of 9½ per cent.

The report was taken up clause by clause.

All the clauses, with the exception of the salaries and those referring to Messrs. Taylor and Lee, were passed.

Ald. Boyd moved, seconded by Ald. Stringer, that the salary of Mr. Keary be $500. Carried.

On the clause referring to the Auditors' salary, Ald. Hyman moved in amendment, that $300 be granted to Messrs. Miller and Jewell for auditing last year's accounts, seconded by Ald. Moore.

The petition of the firemen for an increase of salary was referred to No. 3 Committee.

In reference to the suspension of Collector Taylor, Mr. Jewell was heard in reference to the matter. He stated that on the return of the roll he had found a number of discrepancies, all of which, or nearly all, were in favor of the collector. A note from the manager of the Bank of British North America, stating that $47 had been paid as income taxes for officials of the bank, was read, and Mr. Jewell stated that the amounts were marked on the roll as not paid. A couple of similar cases were also referred to.

Mr. Taylor stated that there might have been errors, but they were unintentional on his part.

Ald. Becher moved that the matter be referred back to No. 1 Committee to report upon, seconded by Ald. Hyman. Carried.

FREE LIBRARIES.

A by-law was read, providing for the taking of a vote of the ratepayers on the establishment of a free library.

Ald. Cowan moved seconded by Ald. Browne, that the by-law be submitted to the people at the time of the next municipal elections, 1884.

The mover and seconder took the ground that it would be in the interest of economy to delay the matter.

Ald. Stringer favored the motion. While he was in favor of a free library he thought at present it would be voted down, and he hoped the Council would allow the matter to lay over.

The amendment was carried.

The yeas and nays were called as follows:—

Yeas—Birrell, Labatt, Cowan, Skinner, Browne, Moore, Stringer.

Nays—Hunt, Hyman.

INCOME TAX.

On motion of Ald. Stringer, No. 1 Committee was requested to make enquiry as to the legality of exempting Government officials from income tax.

NUMBER THREE.

Ald. Hunt reported from this Committee as follows:—(1) That accounts amounting to $679.34 for Hospital be paid; (2) that accounts in connection with the Fire Department amounting to $122.98 be paid.

(3) Requisition for supplies for fire alarm for 1883:—Two bells, $10; 2 bells, $6; 1 galvonometer, $7; 6 cells Lealanche battery, $12; 250 lbs. zincs, $20; 1 coil rubber covered wire, $5; 100 side and 150 top pins, $11; 1 car load telegraph poles, say $100; 500 lbs. sulphate of copper, $40; 10 lbs. sal-ammonia, $1.60; 100 glass insulators, $9. I would also urge the immediate purchase of two rubber play pipes, with controlling nozzles, as recommended in my last annual report, at a cost of about $65, and one gross of 2¼ inch rubber washes, $3. Making a total of $289.60.

All of which is respectfully solicited,

J. A. Roe, Chief of Dept.

(4) The petition of R. Berry and others your committee would recommend that

clause 229 of the Consolidated By-Laws be re-enacted with the following addition:—"That the Market Clerk be empowered to prevent, until after one o'clock, sales of such merchandise as in his opinion would conflict with the business of our city merchants," and that the City Solicitor be instructed to draft a by-law to this effect; (5) that the Grand Trunk Railway account for paupers' passes, amounting to $48.05, be paid; (6) that the petition of George Holman that he be not assessed for street watering on Albert street be granted, provided he paid assessment for frontage on Talbot street; (7) that the petition of Geo. Shuff and others be granted, and that J. Doty's rent for stall in Covent Garden Market be reduced to $7 per month; (8) that Richard Rawlings be allowed the sum of $10, for damage done his potatoes in Covent Garden Market through defective roof; (9) that relief accounts amounting to $704.69 be paid; (10) that the tender of Geo. McNeil to supply wood required by the city for relief purposes, at $4.75 per cord, be accepted; (11) your Committee beg to submit their report on the question of city relief.

Your Committee, having carefully considered the question of relief distribution referred to it by the Council, beg leave to report having communicated with nearly all of the cities in the Province, find all of them varying in their mode of distributing relief to their respective poor. Toronto has neither Relief Inspector nor Committee, its poor being supported mainly by the House of Industry; the Council granting the sum of $5,000 annually for that purpose. Hamilton issues all orders for relief through the Mayor, on the report of the Health Officer after investigating the claims of applicants. Kingston has no regular system, or no Relief Officer, the poor being cared for by various societies in connection with the churches. Brantford distributes its relief through the Ladies' Aid Society, the Council voting sums of money from time to time as required for that purpose. In this city, for the years previous to 1881, the Council disbursed to its poor, on an average, $1,666 per annum; the years 1881 and 1882 it has risen to $5,481 and $6,200, respectively. Making all due allowance for the increase of population during these years, the amount dispensed in public charity has grown enormously, and the question arises whether the time has not arrived when the city should provide a House of Refuge, or Industry, where the poor, especially the aged, would be properly cared for even at less expense than is now paid for charitable purposes. Your Committee, after due deliberation, submit the whole question for your consideration, with a recommendation to the Council to take such steps as will secure the object in view as early as the financial position of the city will allow.

Respectfully submitted.

His Worship left the chair, and called Ald. Hyman thereto.

The report of No. 3 Committee was taken up clause by clause.

Clauses 1, 2 and 3 passed.

Ald. Hunt moved the adoption of the 4th clause, seconded by Ald. Moore.

Ald. Cowan moved in amendment, seconded by Ald. Skinner, that the prayer of the petition of the city auctioneers to re-enact the former by-law be granted, and that the City Solicitor be instructed to prepare said by-law granting power to the Market Clerk to allow auction sales to take place at or after 11 a.m., as he may see fit, his so doing not to conflict with the space required by sellers and purchasers attending the market.

Ald. Birrell moved, in amendment to amendment, seconded by Ald. Hunt, that the petition of the auctioneers be filed.

The amendment was declared carried.

The remaining clauses down to the last were passed without discussion.

The 11th clause was referred back to No. 3 Committee, on motion of Ald. Browne, seconded by Ald. Becher, for the purpose of bringing in some definite scheme for the distribution of relief. Carried.

NUMBER TWO.

Ald. Browne (chairman) reported from No. 2 Committee: (1.) That accounts amounting to $891.67 be paid; (2.) That the City Solicitor be instructed to defend the suit if damages are claimed on behalf of D. W. Ferguson for horse and cutter; (3.) That blank forms be procured for the use of Chairman and Engineer, that all orders for supplies for this department may be signed by either of them, or both, to be attached to all accounts when rendered; (4.) The attention of your committee was called to the leaky condition of the roof of the City Hall, we would recommend that the plans submitted to this and last year's committee be accepted, and that we be instructed to call for tenders, cost not to exceed $3,000.

The report was taken up clause by clause.

The first clause passed.

On the second clause being read Ald. Boyd moved, seconded by Ald. O'Meara, that the clause pass

Ald. Browne moved in amendment, seconded by Ald. Cowan, that the clause be referred back to the Committee for further consideration.

The clause passed.

The third clause was altered so as to have all orders signed by the Engineer and at least one member of the Committee.

Ald. Stringer moved the adoption of the last clause, seconded by Ald. Cowan.

Ald. Skinner objected to the expenditure of $3,000 on the roof of the City Hall.

Ald Boyd held that the roof could not be repaired.

Engineer Tracy stated that to repair the roof would be simply throwing money away.

The clause in the report was passed, it being understood that tenders should be called for a Mansard roof, and also for relaying the present roof.

Adjourned at 11 p. m.